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Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/12. Based on responses received from entities of the United Nations system, the report assesses progress made in the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy within the United Nations system, focusing on the areas of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The report provides an overview of collaborative capacity development initiatives for gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system. It identifies remaining gaps and challenges and sets out recommendations for consideration by the Council.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2009/12, the Economic and Social Council reaffirmed gender mainstreaming as a globally accepted strategy for achieving gender equality and requested the Secretary-General to submit a detailed report on progress made by United Nations entities in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes, and in capacity development, including through mandatory training for all staff and personnel and specific training for senior managers, as a critical means of raising their awareness, knowledge, commitment and competencies, as well as with regard to collaborative efforts to ensure effective gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system. The present report is submitted in accordance with that request.

2. The report draws on the responses of 28 United Nations entities to a questionnaire formulated by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.[1] It is organized into six sections. Section I contains the introduction; section II provides an overview of progress made in the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/12, focusing on the areas of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the incorporation of the gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations; section III addresses progress made in capacity development for gender mainstreaming; section IV highlights collaborative efforts for effective gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system; section V identifies remaining gaps and challenges; and section VI contains conclusions and recommendations.

II. Overview of progress

3. In its agreed conclusions on "mainstreaming the gender perspective in all policies and programmes in the United Nations system", the Economic and Social Council defined gender mainstreaming as a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, with the ultimate goal of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women. Since the adoption by the Council of the agreed

[1] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Atomic Energy Agency, International Labour Organization, International Training Centre of ILO, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Office of Internal Oversight Services, secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, United Nations Department of Political Affairs, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Development Fund for Women, United Nations Division for Public Administration and Development Management, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the World Bank and the World Health Organization.

conclusions, various Economic and Social Council resolutions[2] have specifically focused on efforts to address challenges to gender mainstreaming into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system.

4. The General Assembly has recognized gender mainstreaming as a fundamental strategy in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Assembly has called upon the United Nations system to continue to play an active role in ensuring the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly on "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century". Actions to be enhanced by the system included, inter alia, ensuring that all personnel, especially in the field, received training and appropriate follow-up, together with tools, guidance and support, for accelerated gender mainstreaming. It reaffirmed the need to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender equality and empowerment of women (see General Assembly resolutions S-23/2, 60/1 and 64/141).

5. The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in 2006 called for a system-wide action plan comprising indicators and timetables, allocation of responsibilities and accountability mechanisms and resources in order to effectively operationalize the gender mainstreaming strategy (see CEB/2006/2, annex). In response, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality commenced work on the elaboration of a system-wide action plan. It is anticipated that this plan will be finalized before the end of 2010. In addition, United Nations entities have continued to make concerted efforts to implement the gender mainstreaming strategy. They have made advances in integrating a gender perspective in the design and implementation of policies and programmes and undertaken monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming.

A. Incorporating a gender perspective into the design of policies and programmes

6. Since early 2000, United Nations entities have adopted policies, strategies and action plans on gender mainstreaming, which are currently being implemented. Recent examples include the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), whose policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women was adopted in April 2009. In March 2010, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) updated its gender mainstreaming strategy to further enhance its overall work on gender equality and ensure the availability of adequate human and financial resources to mainstream gender perspectives in the work of its divisions and programmes. The World Health Organization (WHO) adopted the Strategy for Integrating Gender Analysis and Actions (2008-2013) to guide its work on gender equality and enhance health equity. The International Labour Organization (ILO) operationalized gender mainstreaming through its Action Plan for Gender Equality 2008-2009, which outlined roles and responsibilities, as well as accountability monitoring mechanisms.

[2] 2001/41, 2002/23, 2003/49, 2004/4, 2005/31, 2006/36, 2007/33, 2008/34 and 2009/12.

7. United Nations entities have moved to institutionalize gender mainstreaming within thematic areas of work. In urban development, the gender equality action Plan of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), developed in 2008, was approved by the Governing Council in 2009. In 2009, the revised gender-sensitive guidelines for project design and management were also launched in 2009. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) launched a new work programme on trade, gender and development to be implemented through regular budget and extrabudgetary resources. With regard to food security, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) adopted its second gender and development plan of action 2008-2013. The Department of Political Affairs reviewed its gender action plan and adopted a department-wide gender results framework in March 2010. The gender action plan of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), which was approved by the Governing Council in 2007, provides the foundation for strategic interventions in ensuring that gender is fully mainstreamed into the key programme approaches of assessments, policymaking, capacity development and communication.

8. Increased attention has been paid to gender perspectives in humanitarian emergency policies and responses, both at Headquarters and field offices. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support updated their gender mainstreaming action plan in 2008. According to the gender equality policy of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, all field offices are required to develop gender action plans annually. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) developed an "operational guidance on promoting gender equality", which requires that gender equality programming be integrated across the spectrum of UNICEF-supported humanitarian action, from emergency preparedness and response to early recovery. This includes addressing gender equality within the core commitments of UNICEF for children in emergencies and within each programme sector, as well as through key inter-agency mechanisms, including humanitarian clusters.

9. Acknowledging that the ultimate goal of the gender mainstreaming strategy is achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, the institutionalization of the strategy has increasingly become one of the strategic objectives of the entities' frameworks for action. In 2009, for example, FAO developed its strategic framework 2010-2019, in which gender equality was identified as one of the organization's 11 strategic objectives. The activities, outputs and indicators from the gender and development plan of action 2008-2013 were fully integrated into the new strategic framework. Gender equality was a key component in the 2008-2011 strategic plan of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in particular in the areas of reproductive health, women's empowerment and population and development strategies. The gender equality strategy 2008-2013 of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides a road map for programming, measuring and reporting gender equality results across each thematic area of the Programme's work. In 2009, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted a priority gender equality action plan 2008-2013. The action plan contains information on strategic actions by programme sectors pertaining to gender equality with corresponding expected outcomes, performance indicators, principal elements of implementation, monitoring and reporting on action in support of gender equality, and institutional mechanisms for the pursuit of gender equality in the organization, with focus on capacity development, accountability and

representation of women and men in decision-making levels in the secretariat. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) developed an age, gender and diversity action plan 2010-2015 which built upon the achievements of the action plan 2007-2009. The overall goals of the Office's age, gender and diversity mainstreaming strategy are gender equality and respect for the rights of refugees of all ages and backgrounds. These work programmes and action plans highlight strategic actions aimed at achieving gender equality.

10. In addition, some United Nations entities have developed tools to assess the incorporation of gender equality and women's rights in policies and programmes. The secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in collaboration with UNFPA, published the "Disability rights, gender, and development — a resource tool for action" (2008), which contains innovative approaches for the implementation of the Convention in gender and child sensitive development activities. Within the Global Land Tool Network, UN-Habitat developed evaluation criteria to assess the gender-responsiveness of large-scale land tools, to identify where more work needs to be done, and possible entry points to make a tool equally beneficial to women and men. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, through the Steering Committee on Gender and Mine Action, developed guidelines to support the gender advisers and focal points, political affairs officers, police officers and military personnel to translate existing mandates on women and peace and security in a practical way in their respective areas of work. In 2010, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations updated the United Nations gender guidelines for mine action programmes to assist policymakers and programme personnel in the incorporation of gender considerations into all relevant mine action operations.

B. Implementing policies and programmes

11. Through the appointment of gender focal points, the establishment of gender task forces, gender analysis and gender equality assessments, United Nations entities have sought to ensure that gender perspectives are systematically incorporated into the implementation of all policies and programmes. In the Working Group on Gender and the Economy of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, each headquarters section, regional office and country office has a gender focal point responsible for guiding gender mainstreaming in the implementation of projects and activities. The International Training Centre of ILO has instituted a process of peer review on curricula which looks at gender entry points as well as methodology. ILO regularly updates its *Gender Network Handbook*, which contains all key policy documents, and practical guides, toolkits, checklists and model texts to assist its Global Gender Network. The departmental focal points for gender concerns of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) assist the Deputy Directors in their efforts to increase gender mainstreaming within the organization.

12. During 2009, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) promoted attention to gender mainstreaming in 13 common country assessments/United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. For example, in Ecuador, where UNIFEM chairs the gender theme group, the United Nations country teams utilized the performance indicators of the United Nations Development Group to develop the United Nations Development Assistance

Framework 2010-2014. At least four outputs of the Framework track specific changes related to gender equality, including support to the national plan to eradicate gender-based violence and to the Ministry of Finance in the implementation of the gender responsive budgeting. In December 2009, the Department of Political Affairs and UNIFEM signed a three-year joint strategy on gender and mediation, and by April 2010 a gender expert was added to the standby team of mediation experts to mainstream a gender perspective into peace negotiations. The WHO Gender, Women and Health Network (comprised of headquarters, regional and country office staff responsible for gender mainstreaming) continues to focus on joint planning and activities; however, resource shortages pose constraints at all levels of the organization.

13. A number of entities use multi-year funding frameworks, which require incorporation of gender perspectives into all aspects of their work. The UNICEF gender policy was included in its medium-term strategic plan. The UNFPA strategic plan is a multi-year planning and programming framework, which contains one pillar specifically devoted to the achievement of gender equality, with gender-specific outputs and outcomes. In UN-Habitat, gender perspectives were required for some projects utilizing earmarked multi-year funding, for instance, the Global Land Tool Network and the water and sanitation projects. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) incorporated gender perspectives into all parts of its work funded from both the biennial regular budget and extrabudgetary resources. UNEP fully integrated gender into its programme of work for 2010-2013.

14. Increasingly, the importance of regular and predictable funding for gender equality has been stressed. Some entities have budgets that visibly mainstream gender perspectives through allocation of financial and human resources for gender mainstreaming, commensurate with the organizational gender equality goals. In the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the peacekeeping support account and the regular peacekeeping budget for Headquarters and field missions provided scope for funding the gender-related activities of gender units as well as those of all other functional areas of peacekeeping. The operational guidance on promoting gender equality through UNICEF-supported programmes requires that adequate resources and the necessary expertise and leadership were in place to ensure that, during programme planning and preparation, gender analysis would be performed; critical gaps for promoting gender equality would be identified; and advocacy would be undertaken to ensure that those gaps were addressed in national development plans, poverty reduction strategies and other nationally owned planning documents.

15. Other examples included the World Bank, which allocated resources for mainstreaming gender issues in specific projects and analytical work based on country demand as specified in respective country assistance strategies. In UNFPA, resources for gender-specific and gender-related programming were equivalent to 80 per cent of the 2009 budget. Also, UNFPA implemented other funds for gender-specific thematic issues, including the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, the Inter-Agency Joint Programming Initiative on Violence against Women, and the Maternal Health Thematic Fund. UNICEF established a robust mechanism for tracking and reporting on budgets and expenditures for gender equality initiatives at the country programme level.

16. Nevertheless, many entities reported the lack of adequate resources as a constraint to gender equality work. UNIDO was constrained by the fact that its

gender policy was adopted after the budget for the biennium had been finalized. The United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) depended entirely on voluntary contributions for their gender-related work. Funds in the Department of Political Affairs were secured only for the departmental gender focal point and a part-time gender and peacebuilding consultant, and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute had neither human nor financial resources to undertake any gender-related work. With regard to human resources, the Gender Mainstreaming Steering Committee and a network of branch focal points were set up by UNIDO to implement its gender equality policy. UNCTAD identified a post at the P-5 level in the Office of the Secretary-General to oversee gender mainstreaming in the work of the Organization.

C. Monitoring gender mainstreaming

17. Increasingly, results-based management frameworks have been developed by United Nations entities for monitoring progress towards gender equality. In UNIFEM, results-based performance was systematically monitored and reported through an online tracking system that links all its field and headquarters offices. The results-based management framework included three interlinked accountability frameworks: the development results framework, which tracks contributions from UNIFEM to governments and civil society, including women's organizations, towards progress in country outcomes; the managing for results framework, which monitors the performance of UNIFEM in making the contributions to the development results framework outcomes; and the integrated resources framework, which follows up progress by UNIFEM in securing resources required for its work on gender equality and women's human rights. In UNDP, while the strategic plan development framework 2008-2013 included three outcomes and seven indicators to achieve gender equality results, the gender equality strategy 2008-2013 included indicative outcome indicators that could be integrated into UNDP programmes and projects when implementing the strategic plan. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support gender mainstreaming action plan served as a key results-based management framework for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The action plan encompassed three broad goals: policy guidance for advancing gender equality objectives in conflict and post-conflict situations; effective operational support for gender mainstreaming; and enhanced participation of women in peacekeeping. Activities as well as indicators of achievement were defined by each office, and a gender task force was established to review progress implementation. The WHO Department of Gender, Women and Health and the network of gender regional advisers developed a monitoring and evaluation framework. Sixteen indicators were adopted to measure each of the four strategic objectives of the strategy. The first step was to conduct a baseline assessment, which was finalized in February 2010. Preparations for the midterm review were under way.

18. Sound gender-sensitive needs assessments have increasingly gained recognition as important tools for the design, implementation and monitoring of gender-responsive programmes. They allow entities to identify the varying levels of needs of women and men, providing strategic entry points for gender-responsive initiatives and facilitating the measurement of results and monitoring of progress by

the entity. For example, FOCUS was a gender-sensitive global needs assessment and results-based management software that was rolled out by UNHCR in 2009. The tool was designed to facilitate planning and management of subsequent operations, enabling the clear linking of assessments, objectives and activities to results. The World Bank undertook gender analysis through the country gender assessments, which provided basic information for developing policy dialogue and country assistance strategies, designing lending operations that support priority gender issues identified by the countries' own poverty reduction strategies, and targeting grants for women's economic empowerment. Tools for assessment were also reported by UNICEF as part of its programme policy and procedure manual. The tool was reinforced by an executive directive issued in 2009 that encouraged all country offices to undertake gender assessments within the country programme cycle.

D. Evaluating progress in gender mainstreaming

19. United Nations entities have made concerted efforts towards integrating into their accountability framework commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women and have achieved progress at both the system-wide and the entity levels.

20. At the system-wide level, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, in collaboration with the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality led a long consultation process towards the development of an action plan for operationalizing the United Nations system-wide policy on gender equality and empowerment of women, which was adopted by CEB and noted in the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations development system (A/62/73-E/2007/52). At the eighth session, in 2009, the Network discussed a set of 35 common standards defined as the minimum that United Nations entities should deliver in terms of gender mainstreaming. The plan is expected to be finalized in 2010.

21. At the entity level, monitoring by regional and country level management teams and the gender-responsive annual performance evaluations were reported by some entities as innovative gender-sensitive accountability approaches. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations adopted a standard operating procedure, which served as a tool to monitor implementation of gender mainstreaming activities by peacekeeping missions. The standard operating procedure requires peacekeeping missions to submit quarterly reports on progress and challenges to the implementation of mandates on women, peace and security. The UNDP Gender Steering and Implementation Committee set a policy on gender equality within the organization, holding senior managers accountable for achieving gender equality and gender parity results and monitoring investments in the gender mainstreaming strategy. Chaired by the UNDP Administrator, the Gender Steering and Implementation Committee sent a strong message to senior managers that gender equality was a priority in the organization. It enabled the adoption of key policies and accountability mechanisms on gender equality. In ILO, the participatory gender audit methodology was used for headquarters and field offices, as well as a tool for constituents, to self-assess how the mainstreaming strategy was working and whether the ultimate goal of gender equality would be attainable.

22. Entities developed instruments and tools to ensure that senior managers and staff were held accountable for incorporating gender perspectives in their work. In accordance with the gender policy of UNICEF, senior and middle managers are encouraged to define the gender equality outcomes that they wished their staff to achieve, and to track progress towards those results, as a distinct and routine part of collective and individual performance monitoring and assessment. The performance appraisal and development accountability system of UNFPA holds staff accountable for delivering on gender. UNIDO reported on gender mainstreaming mainly at the project level through evaluations. In the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the Executive Board and independent evaluation teams routinely followed up the Institute's work in terms of its gender content. Through evaluations by the Quality Assurance Group and Independent Evaluation Group, detailed analyses of the activities of the World Bank were undertaken to provide an objective basis for assessing the gender impact. In May 2009, WHO integrated a gender classification into its global management system, which asked staff involved in the preparation of workplans to indicate whether their products and services were gender responsive. This initiative helped increase accountability and track corporate progress on the implementation of the WHO gender strategy.

23. An innovation by UNDP was the adoption of the gender marker to ensure accountability in the entity's work on gender equality and women's empowerment. After reviews revealed that the UNDP financial system was unable to completely capture allocation and expenditures on gender equality, UNDP developed a new approach building on the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development gender equality policy marker, piloted initially in four countries in 2007 and expanded to 17 pilots in 2008. The gender marker approach was launched in 2009 and it rates the contributions of investments and expenditures to both gender mainstreaming and targeted interventions for gender equality and women's empowerment. Building on the work of UNDP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs launched a gender marker in humanitarian appeals and financing schemes led by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and piloted it in four countries in 2009. The roll-out in 10 countries is planned in 2010.

24. Another important example comes from OIOS which, in 2009, commenced an evaluation of gender mainstreaming to determine the relevance, sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness of the policies, structures and activities undertaken by entities of the Secretariat to implement the gender mainstreaming strategy. The report will be presented to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session.

III. Progress made in capacity development for gender mainstreaming

25. Capacity development has played a critical role in equipping United Nations staff with the necessary skills and competencies to mainstream gender perspectives in their work and to support Member States in setting norms and policies on gender equality. Through capacity development in gender mainstreaming, entities aim to ensure that the needs and priorities of both women and men are addressed in all the stages of the policymaking process, including in setting priorities, allocating resources, defining goals and targets, and identifying and monitoring and reporting

on progress. Entities further expect to enhance accountability and to institutionalize gender equality within their policies and programmes.

26. The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality made progress towards the establishment of a system-wide capacity development programme on gender mainstreaming. With the assistance of the United Nations System Staff College, United Nations entities are in the process of defining a mandatory basic training course for all staff, at both Headquarters and in the field. A preparatory expert group meeting, held in November 2009, brought together experts on gender equality, human resources, learning and training in United Nations entities to identify the core elements of such a course. In February 2010, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality endorsed the preparation of an online mandatory basic training course for all staff, which would be supplemented by specific modules for different categories of staff — senior staff, programme/field staff and middle managers — based on existing good practices.

27. Joint efforts have been reported with regard to capacity development in the framework of the country programme. The exchange of ideas, resources and tools fosters cross-fertilization of initiatives as demonstrated by the e-learning course entitled "Gender equality, United Nations coherence and you", which was developed by UNIFEM, UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA, to be launched in 2010. UNICEF and UNDP jointly strengthened their knowledge management system by launching this year a "Gender Equality Community of Practice", which facilitates knowledge-sharing between and within United Nations entities and between and within regions. In the 2008-2009 biennium, UNEP adopted a learning-by-doing approach, focused on an in-house capacity development programme, which is carried out through strengthening gender focal teams at the division level and, thereafter, small group capacity enhancement training for project staff. Over 480 staff were trained, which resulted in an increased gender responsiveness in projects.

28. The e-learning course, "Different needs — equal opportunities: increasing effectiveness of humanitarian action for women, girls, boys and men", was developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action in 2010. The three-hour, self-paced course provides information and scenarios to enable humanitarian workers to practise developing gender-sensitive programming.

29. Entities have also focused attention on identifying training gaps and defining action plans to improve capacity for gender mainstreaming. UNDP, for example, devised the Capacity Development Action Plan for 2010-2013. To facilitate a stronger and more coherent response for future gender training, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations developed a gender training strategy for peacekeeping, and its respective action plan. Other examples include the humanitarian field coordination programme of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the standby team of mediation experts of the Department of Political Affairs, which started in April 2010.

30. Different types of training courses, whether continuous, on-demand or mandatory, are increasingly reported by United Nations entities. Examples of mandatory training for new staff include the UNDP "Gender Journey", the World Bank "Introduction to Bank Operations" and the mandatory online gender training developed by ESCWA for all staff. Voluntary or on-demand courses were reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNESCO, UNFPA and

WHO. While UN-Habitat organized systematic training for its field staff, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations developed gender training standards and modules to support predeployment training for civilian and uniformed peacekeeping personnel, and provided continuous and specialist training courses in the field and at Headquarters, for all categories of peacekeeping personnel. In 2009 over 100 United Nations staff from various agencies received gender training from the Gender and Non-Discrimination Programme of the International Training Centre of ILO through open courses in Turin, Italy, and online tools, such as gender audit for facilitators, gender-responsive budgeting and gender mainstreaming.

31. In order to increase the commitment and accountability of senior managers with respect to gender mainstreaming, some entities have carried out capacity development programmes targeted directly to them. For example, a gender perspective was integrated in the leadership development and in senior- and mid-level leadership programmes of UNICEF. Also covered was the leadership's role in promoting gender equality in the organizational culture of UNICEF. UNDP and UNHCR reported induction courses on gender mainstreaming for resident coordinators and for all staff including senior managers.

32. The use of gender specialists to enhance understanding of gender equality was also reported as part of the capacity development at the senior level. For example, the new Director-General of UNESCO set up a Task Force on Priority Gender Equality to provide her with fresh ideas to reduce the gap between policy and practice. This Task Force submitted its final report with recommendations for short, medium and long terms.

33. In some entities, minimum capacity in gender mainstreaming is required for the selection and appointment of senior managers. For example, in recent selection processes for senior managers in UNCTAD, competencies related to gender mainstreaming and gender balance were included in the evaluation criteria. Also, the 2008-2009 senior manager's compact and the 2009-2010 compact of the Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD included the expected accomplishment of mainstreaming gender perspectives into the organization's work.

34. Capacity development programmes on gender mainstreaming have been reported in many thematic areas. While UNDP has developed learning modules on gender and climate change and crisis prevention and recovery, UN-Habitat focused on the areas of land governance as well as water and sanitation. FAO reported a capacity development programme in gender mainstreaming for the agricultural sector, which was being developed in a participatory way with contributions from every division in FAO and partners in the field. The Economic Commission for Europe included lectures on gender mainstreaming in its semi-annual workshop for women entrepreneurs in Central Asia.

35. Several entities supported capacity development at the country level by placing technical advisers on women's human rights in government entities, facilitating exchanges of experience to enhance cross-country and cross-regional learning, developing and facilitating training in specific thematic areas from the perspective of women's human rights, and developing and disseminating training materials and manuals to consolidate lessons learned on specific gender equality and women's human rights issues. For example, in a two-day training in its office in Iraq, UNESCO presented the link between theory and practice in gender mainstreaming. In 2009, UNIFEM supported national women's machineries in 55

countries to lead, facilitate, monitor and support gender mainstreaming throughout government ministries, and, in particular, with respect to organization development, training, research and planning, as well as in developing capacities to work effectively with other government ministries, civil society and NGOs to develop and implement national policies on women. UNICEF and UNIFEM piloted an action learning initiative on gender equality in Albania, Morocco and Nepal, which will be ready for use by other country teams in 2010. INSTRAW, in collaboration with the Government of the Dominican Republic and the World Bank, started a process of developing a capacity development programme on gender mainstreaming in business and companies. UNFPA and UNIFEM organized gender-responsive budgeting training programmes. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Gender Standby Capacity programme — GenCap — had deployed 38 advisers to 26 humanitarian situations since 2007. An evaluation in 2009 demonstrated improved impact on delivery of humanitarian assistance by cluster and sector actors.

36. United Nations entities repeatedly used modern media tools to enhance the efficacy of learning programmes. The UNDP Gender-net is a virtual space for its staff to share experiences and provide tools and guidance across the regions. The INSTRAW Gender Training Wiki was developed in 2009 as an online, centralized resource centre for gender trainers, academics, gender mainstreaming, knowledge management and development experts and practitioners, as well as individuals and organizations in general looking for gender training opportunities, resources and funding. In 2009, the Institute organized virtual dialogues on gender mainstreaming to provide advice and share information and lessons learned on how to develop empowering and transformative gender training. UNIDO created a communication platform for gender mainstreaming on the organization's Intranet, which allowed staff to share knowledge, information and tools.

IV. Collaborative efforts for effective gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system

37. The United Nations system continues to enhance collaborative efforts to ensure effective gender mainstreaming. Through its task forces, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality has actively strived to enhance the United Nations system's attention on gender equality and empowerment of women. It provides opportunities for cross-fertilization and exchange of information on best practices and oftentimes galvanizes collaboration with a range of civil society partners.

38. The biennial workshops, organized by the Inter-Agency Network and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee's Network on Gender Equality, continue to provide opportunities for examining emerging issues and sharpening the approach to gender mainstreaming. In 2010, the workshop, hosted by UNIDO in Vienna, focused on women's economic empowerment while exploring both country ownership for development and the many facets of accountability — international accountability mechanisms, domestic and democratic accountability, and mutual accountability.

39. The Inter-Agency Network played a critical role in advancing the Secretary-General's campaign UNiTE to end violence against women, including in the definition of its Framework for Action and Communication Strategy.

40. Efforts to strengthen collaboration with United Nations country teams and other national stakeholders with a view to advance gender equality were reported by several entities. The UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting enabled a direct working modality between the global level and country offices and national stakeholders in 12 joint programme countries. Through the Inter-Agency Task Force on Violence against Women, UNFPA supported a multi-stakeholder joint programming exercise in nine countries. UNFPA, UNICEF and UNDP worked collaboratively under the protection cluster to ensure prevention and response to gender-based violence in humanitarian contexts. UNDP is the lead on Rule of Law programming with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, supporting women's access to justice. In the One United Nations Joint Programme in Cape Verde, UNIDO collaborated with UNIFEM to ensure that gender was mainstreamed into the private sector development policy. The Bangkok-based Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, co-chaired by the Economic and Social Commission for Africa and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UNIFEM, played a key role in ensuring that gender was mainstreamed in the 2009/10 Asia-Pacific Regional Report entitled "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in an era of global uncertainty" and its recommendations. UNICEF actively engaged in the Zimbabwe United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which resulted in collaborative implementation of activities on the prevention and control of gender-based violence. INSTRAW facilitated systematic capacity development for gender mainstreaming for the United Nations country team in the Dominican Republic. UNCTAD cooperated with the United Nations country teams in the five countries — Bhutan, Cape Verde, Ecuador, Lesotho and Rwanda — where it was conducting country studies on mainstreaming gender in trade policy.

41. Other entities reported strategic partnerships and agreements on gender equality with United Nations country teams. UNIFEM participated in 2009 in 69 gender theme groups, tracked over $5.4 million of leveraged support from United Nations partners for gender equality, and signed 35 cooperation agreements, including seven gender audits in: Cape Verde (carried out by the International Training Centre of ILO), Ethiopia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Rwanda, Somalia and the United Republic of Tanzania. In Nigeria, the goal of the participatory gender audit, coordinated by UNIFEM and ILO, aimed to promote organizational and individual learning in gender mainstreaming in policies, programmes and structures and to assess the extent to which gender equality policies had been institutionalized. The International Training Centre of ILO worked with UNIFEM on delivering training (European Commission/United Nations Partnership on Gender Equality for Development and Peace) and with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on a training-of-trainers workshop for gender focal points.

V. Remaining gaps and challenges

42. There has been notable progress within the United Nations system in strengthening its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Most United Nations entities have in place gender equality policies, strategies and action plans, increasingly with time-bound targets and indicators. Nevertheless, much more remains to be done before gender mainstreaming is systematically implemented across the United Nations system.

43. The review of the implementation of gender mainstreaming, has consistently revealed a lack of uniform understanding of the term gender mainstreaming, despite the definition contained in the Economic and Social Council's agreed conclusion 1997/2. Moreover, it is evident that some consider gender mainstreaming as an end in itself, when in fact it is a means for achieving gender equality and empowerment of women. This misunderstanding has the unfortunate result of inadequate focus on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. The approach to date of appointing focal points and gender advisers, and establishing gender task forces, created a perception that those had the primary responsibility for gender mainstreaming. Yet, focal points are usually junior staff with neither resources to effectively follow up on policies adopted by the entities nor leverage with top management.

44. Increasingly, entities have included accountability for gender mainstreaming in the overall institutional accountability frameworks, monitoring, evaluation and oversight mechanisms, and staff performance appraisal. Also, entities have made important strides in the definition of performance indicators and benchmarks to measure progress, gaps and challenges in implementation. The UNESCO Gender Equality Action Plan for 2008-2013 contains strategic actions by programme sectors and by the entire organization pertaining to gender equality with corresponding expected outcomes and performance indicators. The UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting and the Maternal Health Trust Fund included specific benchmarks, targets and indicators for measuring progress on gender. These were monitored on a quarterly basis, including an annual year-end review. Indicators were developed to measure progress in integrating the concerns of rural women into FAO projects under the "Delivering as one" initiative. Despite these promising developments, the absence of a common tool to compare and evaluate progress throughout the United Nations system remains a serious drawback regarding accountability. Adopting a common set of minimum standards, applied systematically for measuring performance of entities, would facilitate the oversight role of the Economic and Social Council with respect to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women.

45. Measures also included defining evaluation methodologies and guidelines for gender mainstreaming in specific thematic areas of work. The UNDP Resource Guide on Gender and Climate Change (2009) served as a practical tool to assess and increase the capacity of policymakers and practitioners to understand the linkages between gender equality and climate change, and to develop gender-responsive climate change policies and strategies. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations/ Department of Field Support senior managers checklist requested peacekeeping missions to include the promotion of gender equality as a strategic mission plan objective, and to establish gender mainstreaming benchmarks. While these are

laudable developments at the entity level, their replication at the system-wide level has yet to be embraced.

46. The collection of data disaggregated by sex to support policy development, monitoring and evaluation has steadily expanded throughout the United Nations system. UNICEF, UNFPA, the Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM, ILO, the World Bank and the United Nations Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, produced "Gender Info 2010", which was a global database of gender statistics and indicators on population, families, health, education, work and political participation. The database contained more than 360,000 data values from regional, national and subnational levels. UNFPA supported census rounds and gender mainstreaming of statistics, the Health and Demographic Survey and other national surveys. The United Nations E-Government Survey, developed by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, contained a specific section on gender and e-Government. This tool was utilized to assess the challenges and opportunities for the public administration in achieving gender equality and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals through the use of information and communications technologies. While the Millennium Development Goals, with their measurable targets and indicators, have further encouraged the collection of data disaggregated by sex with important progress in a number of areas, including employment and education, data availability in other areas remains unreliable and not comparable over time, for example, on poverty and violence against women. This is an area requiring enhanced attention.

47. Greater efforts have been made to improve methodologies and tools to assess the impact of training and capacity development initiatives in gender mainstreaming. INSTRAW developed a methodology for identifying and assessing best practices, using a written questionnaire, personal interviews and independent evaluations. UNICEF, UNIDO, the World Bank and UNFPA assessed their training programmes using formal training evaluations. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations reported the launch of a pilot electronic training management system which would allow collection of data and monitoring of the number of gender training courses that were held in peacekeeping missions, as well as the number and categories of personnel who participated in those training courses. This qualitative data would be mapped on a quarterly basis in order to analyse trends and patterns in relation to accessibility and impact of training efforts. Other entities, such as ILO and UNICEF, reported the use of formal training evaluation, gender audits and missions to assess the results/impact of efforts in strengthening capacity development and training for gender mainstreaming. While UNESCO explored the "return on investment" model on a pilot basis, UNDP used questionnaires and surveys to assess the needs of staff for capacity development, including learning needs, as well as constraints to incorporating gender perspectives, in country offices. However, these good practices have yet to permeate the wider United Nations system.

48. Despite the broad recognition of the need for increased levels of human and financial resources to enhance the effective integration of gender perspectives across all areas of the entities' work, both resources remain scarce. While some entities have earmarked funds for gender mainstreaming in their regular budgets, others have limited or no funds specifically for gender equality activities. Some entities have depended heavily on extrabudgetary resources to carry out their gender-related

programmes. The lack of adequate, predictable and sustained funding remains a serious challenge to enhancing gender equality and women's empowerment.

49. Although gender balance is distinct from gender mainstreaming, it is increasingly acknowledged that the participation of women in decision-making enhances attention to gender mainstreaming. Yet, there has been marginal progress in the representation of women within most organizations, especially at the senior level.

50. While entities have instituted mandatory and regular training on gender mainstreaming for staff, in most cases, the training remains on an ad hoc basis and voluntary basis. A few entities have in place capacity development action plans with commensurate resources for implementation and follow-up to assess impact. In many cases, however, capacity development constitutes one or two days training. A more programmatic gender skills development training might better instil the competencies required for effective gender mainstreaming.

51. Overall, from the information obtained, it is clear that entities are moving mainly on an individual basis to implement the gender mainstreaming strategy. Aside from the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, which, as the name states, is a loose network without authority, there is currently no single driver of gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system. Therefore, initiatives are not always coherent and might be duplicative. The initiative by the Inter-Agency Network for a system-wide capacity development programme for gender mainstreaming is a welcome development. It is hoped that the composite gender entity, once established, would provide the critical leadership to close these gaps.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

52. **From the foregoing, it is evident that there has been increased commitment by United Nations entities to implement the gender mainstreaming strategy as a means to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women. Policies have been developed, and research on gender perspectives in various areas has been enriched by the collection of sex-disaggregated data and the use of gender-sensitive indicators. Concerted efforts have been made to incorporate a gender perspective into policy development, monitoring and evaluation. Some entities have also established institutional arrangements, such as gender focal points, gender audits and capacity development initiatives, to support gender mainstreaming.**

53. **However, much more remains to be done before gender mainstreaming is systematically implemented across the United Nations system. The concept of gender mainstreaming is not easily understood, and the linkage between gender mainstreaming and the achievement of gender equality remains obscure. While there has been support for capacity development in some entities, including through gender training, in many entities, limited funding constrains its impact. The ability to monitor and evaluate gender mainstreaming is impeded by lack of performance indicators and benchmarks to measure progress, gaps and challenges in implementation.**

54. **The slow development of a common tool for assessing progress and gaps and challenges continues to be a weakness with regard to accountability, as it makes it difficult to compare and evaluate progress throughout the system.**

55. **Despite the broad recognition of the need for increased levels of human and financial resources to enhance the effective integration of gender perspectives across all areas of the work of the United Nations, resource constraints persist.**

56. **Notwithstanding the multitude and the value of information distributed by various United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations via the World Wide Web, electronic knowledge networks and other paths, the available information on gender mainstreaming training is often non-systematic, fragmented and dispersed across the different United Nations entities.**

57. **To further implement Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/12 and other relevant resolutions, the Council may wish to encourage the entities to:**

(a) **Work towards a clearer and more operational definition of gender mainstreaming to eliminate the pervasive misunderstanding that currently prevails;**

(b) **Strengthen coordination, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency in the United Nations system, including its capacity to support Member States in the implementation of national policies for the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women;**

(c) **Ensure that managers, including mid- and senior-level managers, provide the leadership and support required to advance the gender mainstreaming strategy within the United Nations system, including by ensuring enhanced awareness, commitment and capacity development among their staff;**

(d) **Develop and/or strengthen gender mainstreaming accountability frameworks in a coherent, systematic, coordinated and consistent manner;**

(e) **Utilize and strengthen results-based management, including through the establishment of clear and measurable common system indicators and measurement protocols, as well as the collection of good and reliable data, including baseline data disaggregated by sex;**

(f) **Ensure that a gender perspective is mainstreamed into all operational mechanisms, including the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and other such frameworks;**

(g) **Increase financial resources for gender mainstreaming, in particular from regular/core budgets in a predictable and sustained manner, to achieve the organizational gender equality goals;**

(h) **Enhance attention to gender perspectives in medium-term plans and programme budget and multi-year funding frameworks;**

(i) **Further strengthen monitoring, reporting and evaluation of progress in the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy and the**

identification of gaps by using common methods and indicators developed collaboratively, to allow system-wide assessment of progress;

(j) Strengthen inter-agency collaboration for gender mainstreaming capacity development, including for sector and category-specific training, with a view to accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(k) Use existing training institutions, especially the United Nations System Staff College, to assist entities in developing and applying unified training modules and tools on gender mainstreaming;

(l) Increase capacity at the field level to support Member States in the collection and analysis of gender-sensitive information and sex and age-disaggregated data, and the use of gender-responsive budgeting;

(m) Develop effective institutional mechanisms to forge stronger partnerships with key stakeholders, such as civil society and the private sector.